Poems and Pastels

W. E. HUNT.

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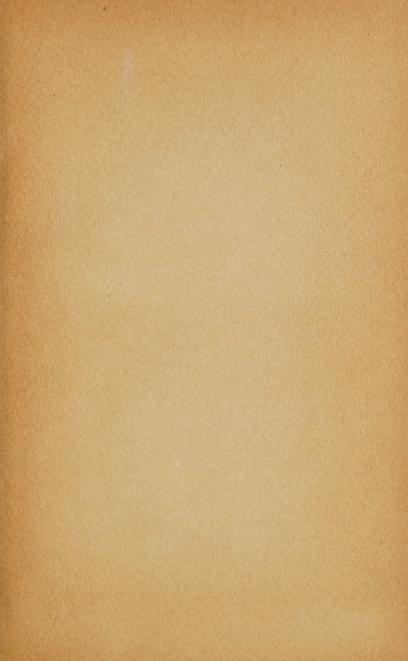
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Poems and Pastels.

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD HUNT

(KEPPELL STRANGE)

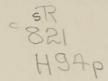


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WILLIAM BRIGGS

WESLEY BUILDINGS.

C. W. COATES, MONTREAL. S. F. HUESTIS, HALIPAX. 1896.



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MOUNT ROYAL-

AT PHILLIPSBURG-



POEMS AND PASTELS.

Dominion Square.

When afternoons merge into eves,
And nights glide by in stoles of grey,
The soft lights woo the tremulous leaves
(Streams quaver so in silvery play),
And shade-spun lace adorns the fair
Brocaded vesture of the Square.

No more in surshine's veilow halls...

Is spread the garish feast of light;

Each blue-domed corridor enthrals,

Ethereal shades of peace invite...

There fails on retrospection's shrine
Libations of life's amber wine.

The wind is charmed with lullaby
(In silken shade sweet color dreams),
And now it whispers of the sea,
Of murmurous lakes and purling streams;
It breathes a sighing sense of balm,
Of southern peace and groves of palm.

Here Music, masked as Laughter, brings
Her tribute to young Liberty;
Care lieth gyved, nor Sorrow stings,
And Joy remembers he is free;
While Time reweaves the days of old,
When all the world was blue and gold.

In God's Acre.

The rank grass was unshorn,—
Dishevell'd, tangled, torn.

The spectral winds mocked loud and low
The mouldering yews o' the long ago;
(Many the dead lying there below)
They did weirdly whisper and grimly blow.

From out the pictured glass,
(A doomed and routed mass),
Warrior saints from the field they bore,
In mingled wailing, all lost and o'er;
Music and color ne'er told before—
To mortal such tale never told before.

The moon leaned o'er the tombs,
Shredding the husks of glooms,—
Oh, eyes of earth and stars above,
They are forgotten and 'reft of love!
(Oh, the toll of bell and knell of love!)
But who stole their eyes to make stars above?

Humanity's Invitation.

Follow me, follow me!

Strip from thy spirit the purple of pride,

Love, the white angel, shall walk by thy side;

While thy brothers and sisters with misery dwell,

Wouldest thy way be my way 'tis through their dark cell.

Wilt thou come?
Then, follow me, follow me home!

Follow me, follow me!

Thy vesture is thin, thyself shalt be torn,

Fashion's lewd sneer and the Pharisee's scorn

Shall assail thee, nor plunder await thee for dole,

Thou shalt only be righteous, with peace in thy soul.

Wilt thou come?
Then, follow me, follow me home!

Follow me, follow me!

Out in the night to encampments of pain,

Out in the night to the shelters of bane,

Where the moments are ashes and dust are the years,

And the well of life's water is bitter with tears.

Wilt thou come?
Then, follow me, follow me home!

A Montreal Eclogue.

Herbert:

I hate these dusty, noisy streets,
The garish lights, the sweltering heats,
The thousand fusty, musty smells,
The coal cart's fiendish din, the yells
From each persistent hawker's throat.
Oh, give to me the wild bird's note,
The wind's sweet sighing in the trees,
The scent of flowers, the sough of seas.

Albert:

I dreamt last night that far away
On marge of silver lake I lay;
Lush melilot composed my bed,
A maple waved above my head,
The resinous perfume of pine
Scented the air, the dappled kine

Prowled through the meadows lazily, A tawny thrush sang on a tree,— Its sweet notes floated from a dell: "Vehu," "v'rehu" and "villillel"-Upon the waters, crystal clear, A dark eyed maid her bark did steer, (Its white sail like a bird in quest); I watched her glide into the West, Where the grey waters meet the sky-That way the jewelled islands lie. Yet in mine ears I hear the breeze, So soft and low it woos the trees; The water like a mirror lies. Stealing the clouds from out the skies. The dream has passed, it went too soon; Even as I saw the rising moon, A blue jay into laughter broke, I rubbed my eyes—and I awoke!

Walter:

Your dream brings other days to me,—
In my old home across the sea,
A lark is singing in the blue,
The waving grass is wet with dew,

And in the woven grass is made
A pattern rare, like rich brocade,
Of buttercups and daisies pied.
A trout stream through the fields doth glide,—
It skirts Squire Jones's ivied wall,
Past spreading oaks, elms stout and tall,
And hawthorn hedges, snowy white,
Whose perfume gives the land delight
And charms the finch and thrush to song—
But this I may too much prolong!

Herbert:

Not so! All pleasant are such themes, Sweet in the living, fair in dreams. I am refreshed, nor more cast down, You've brought the country to the town: The streets are fields, the houses lanes, Lakes linger in the window panes, Those poles outside are surely trees, Those wires are humming just like bees, Those sparrows like to thrushes sing,—Oh, fancy is a pleasant thing, And work is but a pretty play—Tell me some more another day!

The Sea's Influence.

The brine is in our blood from days of yore,

And ever in our ears the tide's-tune rings,

The wave runs through our legends and our lore,

And permeates a thousand diverse things;

The mem'ry of our race's island home

Is charged with salt-sea spray and ocean foam.

Ibis Sin.

He buried it in the fruitful land,
The flow'rs refused to grow;
He buried it in the desert sand,
And all around was woe.

He cast it into the lonely sea,

Afar from mortal ken;

'Twas borne by the tide, despite his plea,

Back to the haunts of men.

Thought and Silence.

Imperial Thought queen Silence wooed,—
The scene a garden fair,
The incense of adoring flow'rs
Perfumed the charméd air;
The Lily and the ruby Rose
Had built an altar there.

Her rich simar of woven gold.

Like alabaster white

Her form. From out her wondrous face
Shone two such orbs of light
As grace the starry firmament
On some rare northern night.

His robes they were of royal hue;
His brow deep, arched and high.
With sweet content he gazéd long
Upon her symmetry.
Her regal couch of violets
The azure of the sky.

It was her kingdom and she reigned.

The satellites of Sound

She bade to drain the Poppy's cup

(Nepenthe far renowned),

And drunken with the scarlet wine

They lay fast gagged and bound.

She led him over flow'r-strewn rocks
To Wisdom's lordly cave,
Whose dais is a diamond,
Begemmed each aisle and nave.
And jewels priceless unto Thought
The willing hermit gave.

She wove them into patterns rare
Of color and of line;
An aureole they were to him—
His subjects for a sign
To evermore her grace revere
And worship at her shrine.

Spring.

The trees are bare upon the hill;
In many an unfrequented way
The scrambled snow is lying still;
Yet saw I Spring's fair face to-day.

I saw her where the blood-root grows;
Each dainty bud she stooped to kiss,
Till white and wondering blossoms rose
To dole of purity and bliss.

The willow wands she gaily waved,

And shyly many a flower peeped out;

Her feet the rimpling streamlet laved,

Then, laughing, leapt a boulder stout.

I saw, where'er she sauntered by,

The emerald fronds of ferns unrolled;

Her fairy-fingers touch the sky,

And azure palaces unfold.

'Neath last year's leaves, through all the woods
Did throb the pulse of lowly things;
Love came, bedecked with tender moods,
And thrilled to song the world of wings:

They sang, those birds, for very joy,

They sang a song of love and gain,
Of happiness without alloy,
Of an old world made young again.

And backward through the years I ran
To find the boy I lost one day,
So anxious then to be a man,
So eager some grave part to play.

I found him not, but, in the quest,I many a burden flung aside,Of Shibboleth, too long a guest,Of doubt and of despairful pride.

And as the purple buds expand,
As violet, pink and white unfold,
And, flowering so, bedeck the land,
When leaves of liverwort are old:

So, by my sere and fading leaf,

New hopes had birth and purpose high;

Life's new-born joy assuaged old grief,

And promise filled the azure sky.

Bells.

Fling to the winds the message old
Of joy and peace, ye bells, adown
The mountain pathway, o'er the wold,
Through village sparse and crowded town.

Bid the wide universe rejoice

That ill and error pass away,

Peal out with one triumphant voice

That love shall reign and hate decay.

Proclaim through all the world again
That charity is only good,
That peace is blest and strife is vain,
And man a mighty brotherhood.

Pessimistic.

We are but phantoms in a shifting scene;
We act a part, and vanish in a breath;
We shatter ev'ry hope on which we lean;
And rest find only in mysterious death.

We are as spectres of the gloaming time,

Born after sun and dying with the moon;

We rend the chords of passion like the mime,

And vanish from the memory as soon.

We pause awhile to dream of pleasant days,
And gild the present with a future bright—
Vain hope, fate leads us onward to a maze,
Amid whose 'wild'ring paths dwells endless night.

Mow—and Then.

Like to a plant upon a lone hillside

That grows and questions not and sinks to rest,
The while the summer glides into the West,
Makes richer mould where it has lived and died;
A fuller soil for after leaf and flower,
For fairer blossom and for leaf more green,
More perfect form, more perfume and more power—
The living legacy of what has been:

So, if our toil and time be spent aright,

In upward growth, in our brief season's sun,

When we shall droop and wane, our life's sand run,

And deep oblivion lead us into night,

While all unknown we lie beneath the mould

A giant race shall walk a greener sod,

A people better for the ones of old,

Sweeter in life, and nearer unto God.

Hiremen.

Citizen soldiers who battle with flame,

Dwellers in peace in the midst of alarms,

Types of Crusaders and peers of the same,

Rescuers manful and quellers of harms.

Fighters of fire with the axe and the hose, Chivalrous, daring, swift-footed and sure, Scorning inglorious, ignoble repose, First to encounter and first to endure.

Modest as valiant, and simple as brave,
Steady and cool in the midst of surprise;
Life but a part in the glory to save;
Duty the watchword, and honor the prize.

Tried in the furnace and proven of gold;
Fearless as eagle and gentle as dove;
Held in all hearts as the heroes of old—
As near in esteem, and nearer in love.

Alone.

Thy pure spirit has fled

Away

From a world full of sorrow;

To-day,

My sad heart is led

By the fear and the dread

Of to-morrow.

Abandoned.

There was a lonely spot in that wild wood,
So lonely, in that place where all was lone,
The vety trees would start in frightened mood,
And cling in close embrace while making moan.

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Song of Autumn.

Come troll with me a merry lay,

And fill your bowl with right good wine,
I am old Autumn, always gay,

And rosy-cheeked, and bright of eyne.

Here's health to that young urchin, Spring
My sister, flowery Summer, too;
Of all good fellows I am King—
So here's a health to me and you!

A vagabond's a lazy elf,
And groweth fat—that's understood—
By whining for another's pelf;
But I grow fat because I'm good!

I wave o'er all the lowly sod—
See how the royal banner gleams!—
Illimitable golden-rod;
I gild the rushes by the streams.

I tint the leaves with Tyrian dyes;I ripen all the golden grain;I do it with my merry eyes,All for your pleasure—that's my gain.

I wink: the berries scarlet go
And purple—they are full of fun!
The lush grape's jovial juices flow,
Nuts swell and fatten, every one.

The apples' cheeks grow pink with glee,

The red plums split their sides and fall,
And ('tis a glorious sight to see)

The peaches twinkle on a wall!

I know when brother Winter starts

He'll stop my pranks, but—never fear!

Bid all good folk keep merry hearts—

I'll be as blithe, I trow, next year.

So troll with me a merry lay,
And drain a bowl of right good wine,
I'm gossip Autumn, always gay,
With ruddy cheeks and bright of eyne.

Slumber Song.

Sleep and rest, for it is best,
Slumber sweetly soon;
Fold thy tiréd eyes and rest;
Silver dreams shall to thee croon,
Sweet the time and soft the tune,
In thy nest;
Fold thine eyes, and thine the boon.

Now the busy hours are gone,
With the work and play;
Jewelled stars look down alone;
Through the sleep-time pass away
Owl and bat and shape of grey;
Sleep, mine own!
Till the blue and golden day.

Night will close her raven wings
With the dusky hours;
Sweet the early carollings
By the brook and through the bowers;
Grateful are the morning showers;
Slumber sings:

" Morn shall wake thee with the flowers."

An Old Song Book.

Pages closed this many a year (Lying in this ancient room),
Lines so faint and leaves so sere:
Letters on a mouldering tomb.

Rose within its pages pressed (Powders in my vandal hand), Once was lovely, was caressed, Treasured, in a vain strange land.

In the lavender of time,
All it was of poignant vow.
Various melody and rhyme,
They are but as mummies now.

(Stars that sing eternally
Surely faint as they grow old;
Luna's white-harp melody
Ever groweth languorous, cold.)

Nay, but they are less than those:
Ripples on a fossil shore,
Press of lily, cast of rose,
Footprints on abandoned moor.

Matrices of tune and life:

Where the folly, guilt and pain,

Love and hope, and grief and strife?—

Fugitive as April rain!

Thus the various waves do pass (Sounding on the shores of time), Fleet as ripples in the grass,

Fleet as mimicry—and mime!

A Lullaby.

Now the woolly lambs are sleeping,
Safely gathered in the fold;
O'er the world the dark is creeping;
From the skies the stars are peeping,—
Silver stars and stars of gold;
Night falls on the land and sea,
While thy mother sings to thee.

All the pretty flow'rs are dreaming,
Where the winds, melodious, croon;
O'er the waters, softly gleaming,—
Rimpled waters, purling, gleaming—
Sweetly smiles the pleasant moon;
Little bird sleeps in its nest,—
Sleep, mine own, on mother's breast!

Sleep, my darling, till the morning
Drives the hours of dark away;
Till the sun, the world adorning,
Opes the flowers with the morning,
And the birds rejoice with day;
Sleep, mine own, till morning's light,—
Angels guard thee through the night!

To the First Butterfly.

So blithe and brave!

You quite forgot the earth was bare—
Indeed, you cared for nothing, save

That skies were blue

Enough for you—
The world was fair!

You fragile fly!

I'd laugh at your temerity,

Only so much I would that I

(Of envious kind)

Could match my mind

To trust like thee!

A Little Boy Afraid.

As I walked up the hill, last night,
As I went up the hill,
Tall trees arose to left and right,
The trees were dark, the moon was white,
And all the world was still.

As I walked up the hill, last night,
As up the hill I went,
Each tree (I closed my eyes in dread)
A giant was, with shaggy head,
Its hands so big and bent!

As I walked up the hill, last night (Because I had to go),

Of course, I knew the trees were trees, Not ghosts, and yet, I seemed to freeze, And oh, I trembled so!

As I ran down the hill, last night,
As down the hill I ran,
I brushed away my foolish tears,
And laughed at all my childish fears—
As brave as any man!

A Serenade.

Over the water's rim
Sinketh the sun away;
Night, dusky Seraphim,
Hideth the garish day.
List to the lute and song
Under thy lattice, greeting:
"Life is brief, love is long,
Bliss all too rare and fleeting."

Stars in the azure sky,

Cloudlets that float afar,

Soft winds, that pause and sigh,

Fragrance of June's simar,

All the night's melody,

Crescent moon, lone sea and shore,

Crave precious glimpse of thee,

Sweet Sovereign—Queen Lenore!

Only a Little While, Only Once More.

If I could see thee once again,
A little while, once more,
Thy tender heart I might regain
And my lost peace restore;
You would forget the scorn you felt—
So penitent I'd be—
You would forgive, while low I knelt,
If I might only see
Thy dear eyes shine on me,
Only a little while,
Only once more.

If I should see thee once again, And find thee strange and cold, And ever dead-ah, bitter pain! The bright, sweet love of old; Yea, even while I felt your scorn-(All bitter though it be) And my sad heart with grief were torn, I'd choose such misery, If I thy face could see Only a little while, Only once more.

your Eyes are Grey.

Your eyes are cold in the misty light,
Your eyes are grey and your voice is strange,
Your voice was sweet and your blue eyes bright,
But faith departeth and all things change.

Ah, no, not thus will I let you go,

Not thus may we part and, well-a-day,
Shall an idle word, tossed to and fro

By wicked lips, change yea unto nay?

You looked at me with your cold, grey eyes,
You passed, and never a word said you,
With the calumny and the poisoned lies—
You questioned not that the tales were true.

No more shall sland'rous tongues bewray

The faith and trust which are love's strong right—
Ah, now your eyes are no longer grey,

Your voice is sweet and your blue eyes bright.

If One Must Weep and One Forget.

Two meet, life's lonely path along,

Two part, and meet again no more;

Yet, when they vanish in the throng,

Perchance, one heart may nevermore

Regain the peace it knew before:

If one must weep and one forget,

'Twere better far they had not met.

The careless hour, so quickly flown,

One never shall recall again;

Each hapless moment, dearer grown,

The one, with never-dying pain,

Must mourn; and peace no more regain:

Since one must weep and one forget,

'Twere better far they had not met.

Forgotten Mever.

Sheen flax of hair, an oval face,

Blue eyes, a sweet and child-like way—

Not much to lose, my friend, you say,

Though youth must have its time and place.

Not much to lose, ah, no—a thought
Of pity for the time so fled,
A wish, perchance, that one were dead;
Yet are you right—perhaps, 'twas nought.

The roses now that deck the way

Are fair as those that bloomed last year,

Their ending full as soon and drear—

Why mourn the flow'rs of yesterday?

When the acute vibrations cease—

Not lightly touched by grief—to ring;

Nor resurrect a buried thing

The future pleasant days of peace

Ah—when your platitudes are past—
If e'er those days shall dawn for me,
Should I forget, nor cease to be,
May all my hopes be overcast.

To a Fair Minstrel.

Enchantress, sweep the golden chords,
And cheer my heart with noble words;
A tilting tourney lay
Of mailéd knights and prancing steeds;
Recount my country's gallant deeds.

Enchantress, touch the silvern strings
Which rustle like an angel's wings
And bear my soul away
To hills and vales where reigns Delight;
Sing me a joyous song to-night.

Enchantress, let thy sweetest note Of harp and voice unite and float In one resplendent stream, Weave into its melodious flow

The maid I love and fain would know.

Enchantress, lean thee to thy lyre,
Evolve from out the resonant wire
Soft themes for rest and dream,
That thy rich fancies I may keep
To soothe me in the realms of sleep.

Howers.

Fairest of all earth's beauties

Are the flowers—

The scented, tinted flowers.

Fairest of all earth's flowers

Are the roses—

The regal, radiant roses.

Fairest of all earth's roses

Are the maidens—

The dainty, queenly maidens.

Lily, lovely Lily.

Fairest flower that blooms in garden, thou; Sweeter than the snowy hawthorn bough Of tender Spring, with perfume overladen, Or lush moss-rose. Pure art thou as a maiden Just budding into womanhood: As fragile, fair, as sweet and good. The soft winds woo thee ev'ry day And bear thy perfume far away; Amidst the fragrance of thy flowers Glad bees hum in the golden hours. Stately and majestically fair, Emblem of a combination rare, Of majesty and meekness And overpowering sweetness; Pride and purity Abide with thee,— Lily, lovely lily!

Violet.

Earthward thy gracious head is bent,
In mood half shy and wholly meek.
Thy robes are woven azure bright;
In thy breast is hidden a star.

Dandelion.

The rays of glory from thy golden heart

Crown the mean comrades of thy place and birth;

True worth is ever—humble though its part—

An aureole of honor to the earth.

Marguerite.

In her garments white and golden,
With the graceful columbine,
By the woodland pathway holden
Is my daisy, mine;

Or, in fragrant meadows growing,
All amongst the dappled kine,—
Gentle zephyrs there a-blowing
My dear daisy, mine;

There the woven, waving grasses, Buttercups that brightly shine, Insects gay and lads and lasses, And my daisy, mine.

Songs of old are sweet with moly,
Amaranth and lotus fine,
But more fair, more sweet, more holy,
Is my daisy, mine.

The Mandering Mind.

No man knoweth Whence it cometh, Whither it goeth.

What though I question thee,

Thou wandering wind, these things to know?

In the rose-garden of the long ago,

When thou wast gentle with thy love, the sea,

And stooped to kiss the daisy on the lea,

Thy voice was sweet and low.

Then, 'neath an old oak's shade,
Glad time, when all the hours were mine,
Life with the burnished buttercup did shine,

So sweet the sound thy passing made, So lightly thou didst trip adown the glade; No music like to thine.

I was so near thee, then,

Could from the past those dreams recall,

Each little dream and my fond hopes of all;

This broken reed may serve for pen:

"The petals fall, so fall the hopes of men!"—

And laugh at that I scrawl.

As children scatter sand,
So stood I on the shores of time
Whirling the golden grains—was it a crime?
The world lay in my hollow hand;
It was not then to me a strange vain land,
With dissonance for rhyme.

Then, all was young and strange?

The pageantry of earth and sky,

Life, light, form, color, silence, harmony,

Thrilled rae with wonder and content;

I questioned not—nor cared I what it meant—

I knew not that dread "Why?"

Idle and happy hours!

The crooked sequences of life,
The fear of living, never-ceasing strife
That nature masks with smiling face,
I knew not: youth is of a Pagan race,
With joy of being rife.

Tell me thy secrets now;—
Show me the ways I missed in youth;
No profit I desire, teach me the truth!
Methinks I hear a minor strain
Unknown in days of yore: is labor vain,
And bitterness and ruth?

As mortals be, art thou?

And as the waves that seek the main,

That, baffled ever, still return again?

Is life a Sisyphean dole?

One long apprenticeship of flesh and soul?—

Is doing all the gain?

Art thou like man, of passions strong?

Thy fury blind, or waged against the wrong?

Is it because of changeless change,—
The irksome round of this mean earth for range?

Dost thou too cry "How long?"

When fruitful days are past

And leaves are falling, ev'ry tone
Thou utterest is dirge-like, fret and moan;
Is it because thy playmates fade
And thou art lonely, tiréd and afraid
And never rest hast known?

Whence comest thou, indeed?

Whence came of mine this mortal clay?

And whither goest thou, so far away?

Whence and whither? Can'st declare the goal

Of my mysterious, immortal soul?—

As night, so sure is day?

(My brother, dost thou ask

Thy soul what in thy soul shall dwell?

Should it o'ertop the stars, search pathways fell—

Not what thou would'st, but what thou must!

'Tis chased on pyramid and scrawled in dust:

"What thou must know is well!")

Thy riddle is unread;

I watch the weakest flow'r expand
And human life, so beautiful and grand,
And all my being feels in these
Companionship, and with the unceasing seas:
I do not understand.

But, ever, more and more,

I mark the long procession, all

The things material, that rise and fall;

Unnumbered legions that do pass,

That come and go, like ripples in the grass,

Like shadows on a wall.

Alway, the truth I seek,

Finding the best at one with right;

Weary and faint, I grope toward the light,

A little nearer ev'ry day;

Sometimes I almost know what thou would'st say,

The "Yes" I still may write.

A circle vast I tread,

My way beset with rock and thorn

And slough and darkness fell. Now, weary worn,

Narrows the road toward the truth: In those old places of my trustful youth, Faith stays for the forlorn.

The flow'rs again will bloom,

When the long night is past and o'er,

And thy sweet melodies will float once more
Through leafy aisles, o'er verdant plain;

Then wilt thou deem past labors not in vain—

And is this then thy lore?

Is thus thy secret told:

That ev'rything is not in vain,

That loss is matched and overthrown by gain,

That peace will overmaster strife,

Death is the corridor from life to life,

That love is worthy pain?

Where Thame Windeth.

The call to early morning prayer

Hath rung from grey church tower;

The anvil-beats sound on the air;

The forge-fire glows in Vulcan's bower—

The smithy's tree-clad bower.

The forge-fire gleams as in a bower;
The milk-pail chinks anear;
The sun is climbing up to power;
The grass still hides a pearly tear—Still hides a last-night's tear.

The grass still hides a diamond tear;

The lark is in the sky;

The squirrel through the leaves doth peer;

The stoat doth prey and gambol nigh—

Doth play right merrily.

The stoat doth prey and gambol nigh;

The thrush in thicket sings;

The field mouse peeps; the rat runs by;

The scythe through all the meadow rings—
It swishes and it rings.

The scythe through all the meadow rings;
The blackbird pipes a tune;
Above the bank, where ivy clings,
The fragrant hedge doth speak of June,
Doth tell of coming June.

The scented hedge doth whisper June;
The meadow banner waves;
The sexton's spade spells out in rune
Its story drear of tombs and graves,
Among the tombs and graves—

Its irksome tale of tombs and graves;
The idle lock is green
With lichen, moss; the bent rush laves
Its broad leaves in the water's sheen—
In broken shade and sheen;

Its leaves in broken shade and sheen;
The weir is white with foam;
The kingfisher's among the treen;
The stately lady sits at home,
The lady sits at home.

The stately lady sits at home,

The moments slowly pass;

She sits as pond'ring o'er a tome;

Her thoughts are far away, alas!

Are far away, alas!

Her thoughts are far away, alas!
(Her lord rides o'er the wold)
It cometh then and there to pass
She shivereth, as if a-cold—
Affrighted and a-cold.

A something turns her heart a-cold,
And chills her soul to fear;
As to herself she hath foretold:
Before her stands a shape severe—
A youth of mien severe.

There standeth one of mien severe, And moved by wrath and hate:

"An hireling's tale hath brought me here;

Long years you left me to my fate,

My dark and dreary fate.

"So long the years and harsh the fate!
(For shame is worse than crime.)
The secret hidd'n in wedded state
Bethought thee till the end of time,
Until the end of time.

"Bethought thee till the wrack of time
I ne'er might vex thy troth,
And all thy life a pleasing rhyme—
Nor did thy conscience rise in wrath,
In bitterness and wrath?

"Nor did thy conscience rise in wrath,
Nor felt thy soul its shame?
With wealth and power, in fashion's froth,
To me thou gav'st not e'en a name—
I bear an alien name.

"Thou gav'st to me not e'en a name,
And I had none to own,
Had none to love and none to claim,
A pointed outcast and alone—
Despiséd and alone.

"An outcast I and all alone!—"
The lady's cheek is pale,
Her eyes are fixed; she maketh moan:
Her haughty lord hath heard the tale—
The coarse-clad peasant's tale.

Her lord hath heard the shameful tale;
His soul is hot with flame;
His teeth are set; he doth not rail;
And oh, but for a word of blame—
Not e'en a word of blame.

Alas, nor e'en reproof nor blame!—
A word of blame in sooth!—
The weir's wild minstrelsy doth frame
Her dying song of death and ruth,
A dirge of death and ruth;

A requiem of death and ruth;

The waters fret and yearn;

The wind is sweet as love and truth,

It softly woos the moss and fern—

The stippled moss and fern.

It dallies with the moss and fern;
The crescent moon looks down
(Remorse hath lessons one must learn),
And far away the lights of town—
The irksome lights of town;

Across the leagues, the glare of town.

And one doth moan and stare

Where armor glints and dark brows frown.

And vesper bell doth call to prayer—

The sinner call to prayer.

The vesper bell doth call to prayer,—
So sweetly doth it call,
We'll bow our heads and enter there,
And pray that God may help us all,—
That Christ will save us all!

On Life's Pathway.

A song to please a lady fair;
Preluded by a few low notes,
A sometime sad, unequal air,
Like to the wand'ring wind that floats
Through open bars at set of day,
The red sun dying far away;
When on the world the mist uprises
Veil-like, and through the gloom creep out
Lank spectres, linked with drear surmises,
Paling the heart with fear and doubt;
When the sun dies out with the voice of day,
And Silence reigns in the gloom and the grey.

But, lo, the moon's beam-weaving loom, Set in the blue concave above, Fashions a nascent robe of bloom—
An amess chaste of peace and love;
The stars look out to view the night,
The moor and wold, the hill and dale,
The stream, a quivering line of light,
The leaves in stoles of silver pale,
The lovers dreaming o'er the same old rapturous tale.

And through the open window, the wind-wine,
Perfumed with distillations from the flow'rs,
Exalts the saddened soul with hope divine,
The golden possibilities of hours—
Of future hours—that will the brighter gleam
When set by the dull, leaden, gloomy age
Of loss and grief—a blighting, bitter theme—
That future solace may not all assuage.

Then cometh carolling of bird,*

That sings his song at daylight's death—
Surely a psalm of praise each breath;

The sweetest tones ear ever heard.

^{*} The Nightingale.

"I have," methinks I hear him say,
"Great store of wealth—a quiet mind,
Abundant food, a dress of grey,
A voice as sweet as summer wind,
The whole wide world wherein to roam,
A wife, dear children, and a home."

The fair moon pales and dies forlorn—
Her shade in azure robes bedight.
Aurora, goddess of the morn,
Opens the eastern gates of light;
And, in her rosy chariot gay,
Gloom and dejection drives away.

Then golden sunlight and glad chants of birds,

The sun athwart the yellow gorse doth stream,

His rays of orange in the waters gleam—

Waters that murmur, flowing, strange, sweet words.

And through the long, the bright and busy hours,

The path of life is wreathed with fairest flow'rs.

The Avengement.

His cheek was pale, and glazed his eye—
I saw he was not fit to die;
I was in merry mood.
We crossed the bridge; he fain would stay;
I, smiling, said, "This is the way,
The walk will do you good."

It was a perfect day I ween,
So pleasant was the river's sheen,
The sun was full and high;
No stir in moorland, wild and vast,
Only the woodland (as we passed)
Rustled and breathed a sigh.

The birds were nodding in the trees,
From flower to flower the drowsy bees
Flit through the quiv'ring air;
A purple haze the hill-tops kissed,
In all the hollows lay a mist,
And all around was fair.

We reached at length the water's edge
(An open pool, around the sedge
And purple rushes grow);
Upon his face the fear-drops stood,
I laughed to see his frightened mood—
I would not let him go.

I told him of a guileless maid,
By ruthless hands defiled, betrayed,
Of base deceit and crime;
Her agonizing cry of need,
A villain's foul and bloody deed,
The silence of all time.

[&]quot;For crime so foul and base," I said,
"A debt is owing to the dead,
Some retribution due;

To have the villain here were meet,

To see him tremble at my feet,

And supplicate and sue."

Fear bound him fast, he could not flee.

I laughed to scorn, with wildest glee,
His shudder, and his moan.

Two wandered down the meadow way,
Two on the water's brink did stay;
But I walked back—alone!

The Christmas Bells of Long Ago.

The smiling moon and stars look out
O'er leagues of snow, from azure sky;
The sleigh-bells ring, the tuneful shout
Of youth, aye happy, passeth by;
But clearer in mine ears to-night,
Than sounds of street and square below,
I hear, 'mid scenes of fond delight,
The Christmas bells of long ago.

I wake, and it is Christmas morn,
My stockings hang at foot of bed.
They overflow, like Plenty's horn,
With gifts from Santa Claus, 'tis said;

Brothers and sisters, filled with glee,
Recount their treasures—ah! you know,
Gifts come like these no more to me,
Nor bells like those of long ago.

The boss upon a copper shield

Meseems the sun; with blush of red,
Redpole and chaffinch flit the field,
The robin perches on the shed,
And with the sparrows wait the time
When from the window crumbs we throw,—
To fail in this we counted crime
In the dear days of long ago.

With songs of "comfort, peace and joy,"
The carol singers greet the scene,
While our deft fingers we employ
In twining holly, red and green—
Self-gathered—in each cosy room,
With ivy, laurel, mistletoe;
Christmas was then no day of gloom—
The bells rang gaily, long ago.

The while the morn grows on apace,

I hear the tooting of the horn,
The coach stays in the market-place,
Team changing at the Unicorn;
In Sunday raiment, clean and neat,
Our fingers itch to clutch the snow—
Snowballing was a splendid treat
At Christmas, in the long ago.

The chiming bells o'er all the air

From the old church so sweetly call,

The villagers assemble there

To praise and pray, from cot and hall;

And "Glory to the new-born King,"

From rev'rent lips doth heav'nward flow;

We seemed, somehow, to really sing

At Christmas, then—'tis long ago.

In fancy once again I see
Our rev'rend pastor's kindly face,
I hear the sweet-voiced melody,
It floats through all the silent place;

That warm, true heart and voice so sweet

Have long been cold and still, I know;

He waits above, his flock to greet—

It seems so very long ago.

When shades of night are falling fast,
On lightsome feet we trip with glee
At "Blind-man's buff" ("Caught you at last!")
Around about the Christmas tree;
To "Postman's knock" attention pay,
At "Hunt the slipper" we're not slow;
"Forfeits," of course, we'd always play
At Christmas, in the long ago.

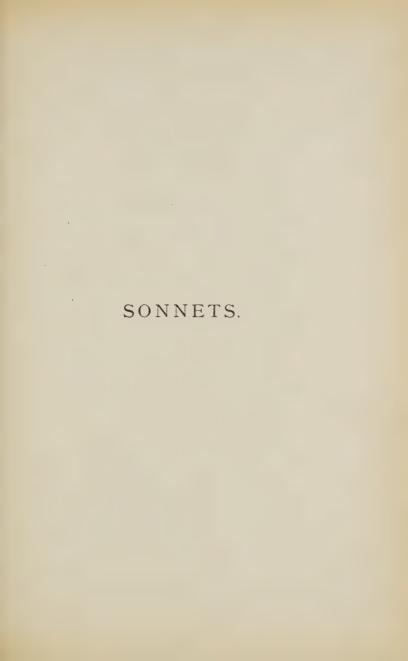
Then father, mother, uncle, aunt,
(Revered and loved each silv'ry hair),
With cousins, neighbors, maids a-jaunt,
Indeed, kind friends from ev'rywhere,
All gather 'round the cheerful fire
And read, within its ruddy glow,
Strange tales, where ghost and fay conspire—
This happened in the long ago.

Then, "Good king Wenceslaus looks out,"

"Let nothing you dismay," we sing,
"Comfort and joy," the tidings shout,
"Mistletoe Boughs" all weirdly swing.

The guests are gone, 'tis time to start,
With prayer and kiss we bedward go;
Ah, night will soon for morn depart—
Such was our Christmas, long ago.

Fair Canada, I love thee well,
And count myself a loyal son,
Beneath the maple leaf to dwell
Till all the sands of life are run;
But mem'ry stretches forth a hand
And tender tribute I bestow—
To-night, I see the dear old land
And hear the bells of long ago.





SONNETS.

Mount Royal.

A NOVEMBER WALK.

T.

Past street and square: the city lies behind—
(Within its walls we'll leave our cares to rest);
The roadway curves toward the gleaming West,
Whence comes, with song and dance, the merry wind,
To match the joyous freedom of the mind;
'Tis true, the road in melting snow is dress'd,
That dead leaves vex the "gully" with unrest,
The ferns with frost are brown and interlined.

But when the branch is bare the view expands,

The lace-like twigs are strown with bits of sky;—
A silver blue, in matchless harmony—
And strange new tints of brown bedeck the lands;
And fairy shades of grey bestrew the strands,

Where, like a sword, the river flashes by.

II.

"The Pines" at length, and resinous perfumes,
(Like subtle incense flooding stately aisles);
Around, a wondrous landscape frowns and smiles;
Above, the firs, like warriors, wave their plumes.

Now, like a sentient thing, the vale assumes
A lone, lost mood, and now the hill beguiles
Its winding path—a many varied miles
It searches for the peak the sun illumes.

Here Summer smiles with the declining sun,
And lingers coyly in the grass below,
And flashes where the sinuous waters flow;
But Winter walks the woods in garb grey-spun,
And wrestles with the wind in bitter fun,
And lieth prone amidst the scrambled snow.

III.

One pathway of the many lures and leads

Through all the curtaining twigs; the wraiths of
grey

Start up like spectres, and so steal away;
The birches amble by as milk-white steeds;
Here flits a bird and there a squirrel speeds
Through groves of oak and maple; sadly stay
Senescent flowers, where the woods array
Their aisles with carpeting of dusky weeds.

To left and right come glimpses of the vale;

The western skies with orange-crimson gleam,—
As to thine ear Romance repeats a tale,

They match their glories in some favored stream
And Silence stalks, a knight in blue cold mail,

Through all this realm of solitude supreme.

IV.

Now, in the flutter of Night's raven wings,

The dead leaves palpitate, and all around

The air is pregnant with that mystic sound—

The deepening and darkening of things;

The inquiet sense to ev'ry footstep clings

As of pursuit; the moon lies on the ground

Awhile—a fay in tangled meshes bound—

Then, imp-like, on some pendulous branch it swings.

The white lights of the city!—it is well.

Here cluster pleasant memories for dole.

Through all dark days: so Beauty's sweet control

Pursues the blessed into meanest cell;

Like to a vestal lily she doth dwell

Within the tender garden of the soul.

THE PASSING OF SUMMER.

V.

"Summer is dead;"—it was the wind that spake,
In the bronze mantle of the sombre pine—
"The sumach bush unfurls a scarlet sign;
The sere rush signals it in stream and lake;
Soundeth a requiem in gilded brake,
Where mateless birds a lonely fate repine;
The sky is veiled in tears; each grey confine
Bespeaks the shrunken branch the leaves forsake.

"I laugh with ruddy Autumn in the morn;
I sound his praises in the golden light;
But when high noon has passed and raven night
Comes rushing down, I wail with those forlorn:
The dying leaves, the lone flowers, pale and torn,
The multitudes confronting death or flight."

THE PASSING OF AUTUMN.

VI.

Senescence reigneth over all supreme,
Save where, in these vast desolated halls
The lowly moss clings to the granite walls,
Or a lone weed dispels a barren dream;
The golden-rod hath spent its latest gleam
On the sere grass; the yellow bramble sprawls
Where the last petal of the aster falls,
And where the crisp fern rustles by a stream.

No more the joyous bird-notes trill and flow;
A silence reigns—as in a city old,
Buried and still; the glory of the leaf
Hath passed away; life lies in overthrow,
Benumbed with the nepenthe of the cold;
The winds proclaim the bare world's silent grief.

WINTER-THE FIRST SNOW.

VII.

How tenderly this white-winged silence flies

From grove to grove; upon this couch of down

A multitude of tiréd things are strown,

And some but rest and some no more shall rise;

Where the wan maple boughs beseech the skies

A dead leaf shivers; and the sun's last frown

Is purple in the distant woods of brown;

The shadows lengthen and the daylight dies.

The silver billows and the silver moon,

The silver stars, the shimmering silver shore,

Have charmed the winds and they forget to
blow.

It is a peace that passeth all too soon:

These voices threaten, skies are darkling, o'er

You upland strides the storm; come, let us go!

Worth.

For all (it hath been so decreed) must bring

Some tribute to the universal whole

Of that vast influence, the age's soul—

It claims a part of ev'ry sentient thing;

The one doth scatter largess as a king,

The other squeezeth out a miser's dole:

According to one's worth one pays a toll—

An uncut pebble, or a jewelled ring.

The mind doth at another's table fare
Responsive to its merit and degree;
"The light that never was on land and sea"
Illumes the noble hall where those who bear
Thought's golden passport sit,—these manna share
For guerdon—love and truth bestown in fee.

Doomed.

So long ago it seemed, that nameless deed,
So long, that, through the brier-tangled years,
The retrospect was strewn with craven fears;—
The harvesting so certain from the seed.
His anguish rocks him as the storm a reed,—
That awful sentence ringing in his ears;
(Commingled with "Too late!" "Too late!") he nears

The portal where death hastes with flying speed.

He dwells thenceforward on a haunted shore,

Where all the soughing of a midnight sea
Repeats a dirge of doom continually;

Ever the bat-winged wind flaps fast Hope's door.

Oh, if contrition could the past restore!

And shall death end the awful penalty?

Bolden=1Rod.

Beshrew the coinéd gold!—and so, take heed,

Nor palter with the dross to form a god—
Behold, the dandelion gilds the clod,

The buttercup adorns the dewy mead!

Doth it not bring contentment to thy greed?—

Then satiate thine avarice: the sod
Gleams with illimitable golden-rod,—

And, of a surety, thou art rich, indeed!

The burnished banner of the summer's prime
Waves happy mortals to a golden feast
(The largess rare of yon high Eastern priest!)
Unstained by goaded greed, or shame, or crime.
Oh, glorious yellow golden-rod!—sublime
Free-off'ring to the greatest and the least.

Mutability.

So Nature weaves a chaplet for Earth's brow,

Purfles her dress, embroiders her low shoon,—
Golden sun-spun and silvern of the moon—
To welcome conq'ring Spring, her lover now,
And celebrate stern Winter's overthrow;

But when tired Spring in Summer's arms shall

swoon

And Autumn die on some dark afternoon (Who stifled Summer), then shall Frost and Snow

And bladed Winds, dread Winter's satellites,
Strip off her finery and leave her bare,
Her rifled form the sport of bitter Nights,
Her nakedness a jest for the rude Air;
The fickle Seasons ravish her delights,—
But constant Beauty tempers her despair.

Pathos.

Her sad eyes move beneath the brows of care,

Plaintive and piteous in their appeal;

She stretches forth a hand where suppliants kneel,
Her tones enforce the accents of despair;

She pleads with ruthless famine to forbear,

With steadfast hope for adverse fate's repeal,

With health to conquer pain and sickness heal,

That sympathy may trouble's burdens share.

She wages war against a single foe,—
The callous heart, indifferent to kind;
Her weapons are the weak, the halt, the blind,
The agéd poor, the child of want and woe,
The broken-hearted, whom the fates o'erthrow
In the frail body, the estate, or mind.

Chrysanthemum.

Like to the wand'rer in a spectral night,

Where grey and gloom alone are manifest,

Who—pacing through the weary hours' unrest—
Chances upon a vision of delight

In some high hall, a composite of bright

Color and form, in bountifulness expressed,

And lingers for a while to call it blest,

His heavy heart thenceforward gay and light:

So, in the dun hours of the dying year,

When retrospective thoughts my way pursue,—
A motley, ill-assorted retinue,—
And Winter reigneth, sterile and austere,
Luxuriant Chrysanthemum, sans peer,

Your beauties ban my cares, my hopes renew.

The Unutterable.

There are some things that may not all be told:—
When all the riches that thy soul hath bought
Are trodden under foot and counted nought,
Thou wilt pretend a liking for thy gold;
Thou canst not say thy warm love hath grown cold,
The life's devotion hateful and unsought;
Some secret things there are by life enwrought
That even prying death may not unfold.

There are some things that never may be said,
So dark and dreadful is their secret pride;
But, it is told, when warm blood floweth red,
The things inanimate, that stay beside,
Will take on sentiency, and shriek and spread
The fearsome tale the guilty fain would hide.

Melancholy.

"Come" (sweet the calling) "leave the garish light,
Soothe thy tired eyes in the deep peace of mine;
Adieu, these yellow halls, this amber wine!—
Have I not wooed and won thee, in despite?
Dear love, see, yonder shadowy groves invite!—
My dusky wings shall bear thee to that shrine
Where Solitude and the Night Shades entwine
Wreaths and a ring to grace our marriage rite."

The maple bears autumnal leaves in spring,

Ere the key-fruited silken flight is o'er;

Joy may not enter, gracile youth takes wing,

Where she hath bound him on that twilight shore;

Ah, sooth,—begotten of her promising!—

The sounding of the sea of Nevermore!

Romance.

It chanced upon a memorable night,

Within the circle of a lamp-light's gleam,

A boy devoured a book—ah, book supreme!—
And in its pages found a new delight:

A wonder-woven land of Fancy bright,

That grew and evermore to grow did seem,

Till the old world he knew was but a dream,—
The common precious and the darkness light.

All shapes and climes, Romance, are one to thee,
The herald flower of spring, last fruit of fall,
The songs of birds, the four winds' mystery,
The whisp'ring of the leaves, the siren's call,
Past, present, future, sky and land and sea,—
The glamor of thy spell is over all!

PASTELS AND SKETCHES IN PROSE.



PASTELS AND SKETCHES IN PROSE.

A Damask Rose.

Before the roses went last year their subtle influence strangely affected me. It was as if Mary herself was present with them. Often in my room, where the scented air floated in, I would start up suddenly from book or reverie expecting to find her there. With the fading of the roses came an indefinable sense of loss, more than of the flowers themselves. It exceeded the loneliness of a deep wood after the sweet song of a bird, or the desolation of halls charged with the memory of long-lost companions—it was poignant and of the spirit.

The winter passed sadly away, relieved with the cares of school and study; but, with the return of the roses, a strange thing happened. My love for music had found expression in training the voices of the village choir, and, in the practice of a new anthem, the hour had grown late. The clock struck nine as I left the old ivy-caparisoned church. It was a deep bass bell, and it reverberated weirdly amongst the gnarled and mouldering yew trees, with their mantles of sombre bronze. As I passed swiftly over the stone flags, a strange clangor pursued my footsteps and echoed, anear and afar, in that realm of tombs, even to the remote corner where she lay. I closed and locked the iron gates with unusual haste and noise, and it was then I knew that I had been afraid. The notes of the bell fascinated me, like the speech of some fearsome, sentient thing. I clung to the iron bars and could not move. All around me, elsewhere, silence reigned—the silence of the grave; the next moment, and I was not alone; in my hand was a rose—one of her damask roses—the first full blossom of the year!

The wan moon leant over the valley and flung mysterious shadows of the giant elms over the sward.

In my room the lamp was burning, and a vase of damask rose-buds adorned the table. As I sank into a chair, Mary's raven greeted me and perched itself upon my shoulder. I had sat there a minute, or an hour—age is of actions not of minutes, and I kept no count of time—when the purfled edges of the roses began to coalesce, and, as they coalesced, a human face grew there—the sweetest, saddest face—the face of Mary! So suddenly as it grew, it faded away, but not before its unutterable appeal had graven itself deeply into my very soul. When the last faint image had died away and only the roses remained, her raven nestled his head lovingly to mine and uttered her name.

Three times that night, from dark to dawn, I arose, environed with the same wild dream—if dream it were. Clad in that last sad robe of all, she stood by my couch and compelled my shuddering sense. She was walking in the meadow, towards the pool, with someone whose face I could not see, but whom I knew. Darkness intervened, and with the dark came a wild cry; then that other one returned alone, and I saw his face. I arose, with the cold dews of horror upon my head, and flung open the casement. The

peace of the moon calmed me, the cool night air fanned my distempered brow. "This," I said, "is a very fantasy; it cannot, must not be!" Yet, even so, her spirit lingered near me, and I knew that I had taken it for a sign. The damask roses she had loved so well clung to the wooden walls and kissed the eaves of thatch; below me, sad-eyed pansies and forget-me-nots were sleeping; the stream moved musically past the privet hedge and into the shadow of the rustic bridge; the nightingale's sweet notes quivered in the hawthorn bush. Yes, it was beautiful; but what was beauty to me any more? Deep in my heart I hated it, this beautiful world—so callous, so cruel and cold!

The next night, and the next night again, and three times each night, the tide of dreams enveloped me: and ever with more of reality and less of dream. At first, there had been question and doubt, and travail for truth—but not so any more. Nearer and more vivid it had been wrought for me, until, in that last presentment, I could no longer question, for no darkness had intervened, and in my very presence the deed was done. With an unutterable cry ringing in my ears, I awoke, and her raven was screaming in

the room. A despairful scream it was, like an echo to her own—and God knows what more than an echo it might have been. For an awful second, he pierced the darkness with that unforgetable cry, then he fluttered to the carven post above my bed. Silence intervened—and such a silence!—then he called her name, but softly, as if to himself: "Mary! Mary!" The last faint sound still floated on the air when he fell heavily beside me. I put out my hand to soothe him—but he was dead!

My hair was white—white as the mountain snow. I had felt it so turning in the dark, while I lay in the agonies of despair, powerless to aid in that supreme betrayal. I took the poor dead bird into the garden, and buried him under the cone-trimmed box tree, near the jessamine-covered porch; it was there he used to watch her departures and home-comings. The dawn was shredding the husk-like mist that enveloped the undulating chalk downs; a fiery cloud hung over the uncovered Roman ruins. My thoughts were clear and cold to bitterness. Heretofore, the past had claimed my all of passion and of will; but now, while the hours stole on, a purpose for succeed-

ing days took shape—how and whence I have not sought to know.

To the school-room I carried a bunch of her damask roses, and placed them in the vase upon my desk, as she was wont to do. He marked my stricken face and hair with much concern and more of fear. He drew near to the roses, and shrank away and shuddered, and once I heard him mutter: "Her roses stifle me." And it was as if I had been listening to the grinding of the mills of God; but I spake no word at all. Nevertheless, I marked his shudder and his moan, and so the days went by. What came to him in the silent hours I do but guess; only, I know, that more and more the subtle influence of her flowers compelled him; only, I know, he knew that that dark secret had been revealed to me. So the days drew out to the one day, but no word had passed between us.

This morning I sought to gather a bunch of her roses for the last time, but only one blossom remained of the many I had noted there last night; all the lawn was strewn with the delicate petals of the others. He was waiting for me at the school-house door; it was unusual, but it did not surprise

me. We entered the school-room together, and I gave him the rose. Then he said: "A year ago to-night;" and there and then I knew the night would hold its charge. I took the sachet with the dead rose she had carried from my breast, and it seemed some other than myself had forced it into his hand and left it there. He was haggard, and his body seemed shrunken in its clerical garb.

The moon was at the full when he passed the gate, and, at first, I did not know that he was unconscious of my presence. We walked on together, side by side—and we were not alone! We reached the pool, and that influence, or the hour, must have benumbed me, for, once again, I was powerless and entranced. The horror of that supreme vision returned, but more real, more vivid, until my soul writhed in bondage, and my gyved heart bled with pain. When that ghastly, phantasmagoric pantomime had ceased, he sought to fly, as he had flown before; and step by step he seemed to fight with some dread, invisible thing that urged him towards the pool. Agony had stolen my strength, and I could utter no sound, until, at length, the secret thing prevailed, and he

went down with a cry that has never ceased to ring in my ears, and never, I think, will cease again.

He arose once, like some fabled horror, with the viscous scum of a year enshrouding his face; he arose twice, with the slime of a terrible year's growth all about him, like a green elephantiasis; he, too, was voiceless now, but his eyes spake of infernal fires through their slimy veil. Still spell-bound, I waited for him to arise a third time, but the tumult abated, the circles slowly passed away, and only a few shell-like petals of the last damask rose floated on the smooth, pitch-black surface of the water.

From Right till Morn.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, the yellow fog began to thicken in the city. When Cecil Farrell emerged from his office in Chancery Lane, the street lamps resembled yellow smears upon opaque, dirtygrey streamers. The falling sleet and snow seemed to hiss as it mingled with the churned, whitey-black slush of the roadway and pavement—slush that the footfall disturbed and scattered, and the clattering vehicle flung in the face and upon the clothing, tenacious and disagreeable as liquid pitch.

"A pleasant evening, this," muttered the young lawyer, as a hansom-cab dashed by, scattering the viscous filth—some of which the malicious wind blew into his eyes—"a truly charming evening!"

Even the Strand—that sentient whirlpool—had a fit of the blues. The bedraggled mosaic of humanity

hurried along, like doomed sprites, from gloom to deeper dismalness. 'Bus after 'bus, hansom-cab and four-wheeler filled the roadway, in a never-ending, variously-directed stream—dash and bustle and roar. Only light and heat and forced laughter streamed forth from gilded, flaring, mirror-glinting saloons; rushed out, laden with alcoholic fumes, upon the benumbed, depressed and fog-bound sinner—enticement, lure and trap.

Cecil Farrell pursued his way through the motley throng, the while the fog yellowed and blackened and thickened—blinding, choking, poisoning him. Faugh, it was sickening! The murky, humid atmosphere had chilled him even to the bone by the time that he reached the electric beacon that projects its glare of light athwart the entrance of one of the Strand's most palatial taverns, or restaurants. Within all was snug, and warm, and nice; without—fugh! He lingered and looked wistfully upon the magnificent and curiously-shaped lustres, glistering like crowns of living pearls; upon the red and gold curtains, rich in color and elegant folds, draped over walls of white marble, enriched with rosso-antico and Algerian onyx; upon the mirrors, the carving of

whose frames was as of solid gold; upon the curiously chased, rich walnut cabinetry; the palms and ferns, set in magnificent majolica vases; upon the well-dressed people, who sat chatting and smiling and sipping their wines and hot grogs, the while dapper, smirking, dressy waiters moved obsequiously to and fro—looked upon it all a brief space; looked upon it long enough for desire to tempt and goad him to enter there.

"It is true," he complained, "that I promised Mary and that stern, idealic mentor not to drink again, and I have kept my word until now. The level round of dull content has brought its monotony; the petulance of the trivial has sung in a varying chorus of complaint; clamant responsibility has urged its extensive claims; all that is comprehended in the simple words, home and child and wife, have exercised their prehensile powers—and I have kept my word. And yet, and yet, 'What pleasure can we have in ever climbing up the climbing wave?' In wine is fashioned the roseate fantasy, the Elysium of content; stern reason abdicates to a more complaisant monarch; there is variety in the realms of the Chalice; forgetfulness reigns in the kingdom of

Nepenthe. Need the slight flux and inconstancy of the moment mean perforce the empyrosis of virtue, honor and sobriety? Three years of rigid abstinence; three years of battle with appetite; three years of expiation for past folly and degradation. My will is set: the wine-cup shall rule my assured strength never again, but be as a slave to my pleasure and my moods. Why should I stand without here, cold and depressed, when warmth and merriment beckon me eagerly from within? Just one glass, then, for old sake's sake; just one, to drink everybody's good health in; just one, to cheer my drooping spirits and quicken my sluggish blood; just one—no more!"

He had placed his foot upon the first marble entrance step, when he was stopped by one who, in appearance, was very like himself, only—Farrell owned it, even while he hated him—better than himself. He knew that, the while he taunted him; perhaps the memory of past services made him the more bitter. "You here!" he exclaimed, angrily; "you here, dogging my footsteps and spying upon my actions! You here, with your eternal advice and croaking of evil and disaster! I thought I was rid

of you for good and for ever; I'll have no more of you—now go!"

In reply, the other regarded him gravely and sadly, and, Farrell thought—with rising anger—pityingly, too. "Don't go in, Cecil," he pleaded; "keep away from your greatest enemy; remember your promise to Mary, to yourself, to me—remember your sweet girl child; remember your past!"

The days had crept along to purpose, to vain imaginings of "just one good time;" and, yet, the other might have conquered singly; his power in single contest had often proved mighty against Farrell's strong desire; but it was not so to be decided. The drink fiend allows his victim little to do with the shaping of his destiny. The wine-bibber marks out for himself a future course, and thinks to follow it, in spite of his tyrant's caprices—vain hope! Fate, in the form of his weakened will and diseased appetite, the ubiquitous saloon and persuasive friends, takes him by the hand and leads him to a maze, amid whose bewildering, thorny paths he rarely finds the road he wished to travel.

Two friends appeared upon the scene, with flushed faces, thick of speech, breaths redolent of wine—

they had been celebrating a birthday! With banter, jest and insult they succeeded, for the time, in driving away Farrell's ascetic companion and persuading Farrell to take "just one glass of Cham." Just one glass, that, ascian-like at noon, projects no shadow; just one glass, no more! He who laughed but once, at seeing an ass eat thistles, would surely laugh again at the confident assumption of the traveller on this caltrop-scattered path.

Just how the remainder of that evening was spent Farrell could not tell; even memory, after a time, deserted him. The lurid details that he remembered were unwholesome enough; each succeeding libation brought a lower depth, until a self-abandonment was reached that shrank from nothing abandoned. But visions arose, even then, of places visited and vain words spoken that brought the flush of shame to the cheek and bitter humiliation to the heart; and that was not the worst—would that it were, then long penance might have cleansed the stain. During the wild revelry, that other one returned once and again; returned to urge the claims of wife and child and home, of honor, respect for self; returned to be repulsed with the greater ease and vehemence as the

night grew into morning; until, finally, Farrell raised his glass, and shouted wildly, "Here's success to crime!" The toast was drunk amid hilarious shouts of defiance; then, that other—whom men call Conscience—left him.

Farrell had confused recollections of leaving his companions; of being driven through nearly deserted street after street; of ghost-like bush and tree and frost-laden wind on Hampstead Heath; of paying the cabman at the gates of home. He dimly remembered stumbling along the carriage drive, sometimes on the gravel pathway, sometimes on the turf of the lawn, sometimes through the flower-beds. He remembered the fumble with key, the stagger across the hall, the confused lights of the room. He remembered a face inexpressibly shocked, and the single word "Cecil!" uttered in a voice charged with love and pain. It seemed to him that he stumbled and would have fallen; that she sought to support his staggering steps; that he pushed her petulantly away; that she fell, striking her poor head against the marble curb of the fire-place; then, all else was blotted out-horror reigned supreme. God knows whether it happened just so or not; little booted the intent, since the deed

was done: Farrell's wife lay dead at his feet, the blood streaming from her hair—his hand had killed her, and he was a murderer!

There are some things that may not all be told, so dark and dreadful are they; some horrors that the imagination shrinks to contemplate, that arouse a deeper dread even in the category of the dreadful: at such awful times human expression shrinks into nothingness. Then inanimate things take on sentiency and shriek aloud the fearsome word the guilty fain would hide.

Murderer! The air was filled with clamant voices that proclaimed it. The clock spoke of it sorrowfully to the silent house; dog howled it gruesomely to dog over all the neighborhood; the wild shriek of the flying engine sobbed it out with piercing reiteration to a slumbering world; the wailing wind recurred to it with fugue-like persistency; it was beaten through all his guilty being as gold is beaten to the leaf.

Then the red blood sprang into his eyes and upon his flesh and garments; it crossed the floor and climbed the walls, and line by line it spread and grew until every place and thing was dark and deep with the scarlet horror. The flame of the yellow fire deepened into purple, and its complaining voice was attuned to the sound, in a murderer's ears, of blood pattering upon leaves in a haunted forest. Where the lamplight had shone, a thousand ruby streams ran on and on into a great red, rising sea.

The dainty, deadly toy glittered and gleamed with crimson, which dripped into its like upon the floor, keeping time to the death-watch click of the skeleton clock; dripped and gleamed until the wreak of the suicide's bullet proclaimed the passing of a spirit to the Judgment Seat.

In the Land of Shadows.

It is always the same, always the same, always the same—begins and ends and begins.

Through all the long hours I sit and brood—amid the grated walls, the fiends that mock, the fools who gibber, and the strong, cruel men—and the grim walls vanish with the gibbering mimes and the curse and blow, and into the light there comes a youth—a happy, light-hearted child—with a future full of bright possibilities. And every morning rushes to meet the night, so quickly pass the days, amid scenes so fair, and crowded, joyous life and mother's love past comprehension. I see a lamp-lit room, with that mother sitting there and that youth kneeling at her feet as before a sacred shrine, their voices mingling in a simple, holy prayer, while the joy-bells of love and sweet affection ring in mine ears, intense

almost as pain; and in the night, from out fair visions, loving eyes linger about the dreamer, and a voice, sweet as angel's whisper, murmurs on the air, "God bless and guard thee, mother's dearest one!"

Another youth appears by the side of him first seen, and these two are knit together by the ties of holy friendship and a common love for the beautiful and the true. Together they watch the sun painting the vaporous clouds with amber and purple and dazzling gold, while the dew-drops yet glisten in the long tangled meadow-grass and the sylvan warblers raise their glad voices to the morning sky. They wander through miles of woodland, intermingled with undulating hills, silver streams and pretty villages, ivy-clad churches and moss-mantled tombs, meadowlands and fields of waving corn. Propped on couch of moss and fern, fragrant as amaranth and moly of old, they lie in the long summer afternoons beneath the cool, umbrageous foliage of the forest trees, where the stately elm, the spreading oak, the patrician beech and the other woodland monarchs have lived so long in close communion that their branches embrace and intertwine. And even so closely are the souls of these two interknit, and the communion

of the trees echoes their soul-voices, while they build fair cities and stately palaces in the domain of thought, where only good prevails and all around is fair.

Time passes, and the friendship increases with the increasing years and the added cares of the day, and maturer thought and more defined aims. They are working together, side by side; their toil, their pleasure, their hours are united—one roof covers them in the sleep-time. A common vista stretches before them of toil in the seed-time, of plenteous reaping, and a well-filled garner of accomplishment at life's eventide. But whatever betide, whether of sun and shine or storm and stress, through placid waters or storm-tossed seas, the silken cords of love might ne'er unbind; nor dangerous reefs, nor jagged rocks, cut friendship's bonds in twain.

The hours fly by, and another face appears—a sweet, girlish face, with wondrous eyes, like soul-windows, and fair, wind-kissed hair, and a mouth as the portal of beauty's temple, whence issue sounds divine. Exceeding fair and graceful she appears, encircled with a halo of spotless purity—the type of glorified maidenhood. Her goodness, sweet-

ness and pity holy and unfathomable. Hating nought but baseness and dishonor—and these with an exceeding loathing.

She smiles on both the same—and these two sing in chorus her unmatchable divinity—beneath the broad sun, in the gloaming, beneath the moon and stars, like a vision of light from some fair world far away.

She smiles on both the same, and in sweet converse the bright hours fly by all too quickly; but in the slow hours come reveries and visions—and two only are walking in a pathway set with light. And these two friends are the same, and yet not the same, and they do not understand; and then it is not the same and they each know; but no outward show reveals the estrangement of the soul—and the hours go by.

In the circles of the moon there comes a time when one is filled with an exceeding great joy—a joy surpassing knowledge; only that fading friendship strikes a minor chord of sorrow; that gain, so precious to one, to the other brings loss and pain. And the rift widens.

The hours fly by with woven wings for one-that

first youth—through dreams of love enchanting. The unclouded blue of heaven's high dome deepens, and the pale moon rides above amidst the myriad stars: she silvers the tips of the rustling foliage, and mirrors herself in the depths of a glassy lake, while the sweet, clear voice of the melodious nightingale floats upon the peaceful air of night—and thus, and then, in beauty's setting, is love revealed and glory glorified.

Is it but a dream, a fantasy; or do the angels sometimes hallow a spot of earth and transform it into a paradise?

Out of the darkness rises an old-world home, set in a garden fair, in the midst of a fertile valley hemmed in by wooded knolls. Every line, every character, each color and perfume and sound, every fine gradation of light and shade, is graven deeply into my very soul. I see the old rambling walls overset with rough warm stucco, to which cling ivy, jessamine, clematis and honeysuckle, roses, red and white and golden; the worn tiled roof, vari-colored and gay with patches of lichen and houseleek and moss; the swallows circling to their nests beneath the eaves; the sparrows twittering in the spoutings; the pigeons cooing among the tall chimneys and on

the ridges; the pearly smoke lingering in the massed foliage of the trees; and the windows reflecting the dying glory of the sun.

It is a fair spring evening. The sweet, smiling moon and the stars are out, and the garden is bathed in opalescent splendor; so peaceful, so calm, so holy. The incense from the sleeping flowers lingers awhile in its upward flight, perfuming all of earth. The violet, jonquil, and daisy, the sad-eyed pansy and forget-me-not mingle with the tall hollyhock and quaint-cut yew, and plats of soft, deep grass, smooth as velvet. The pathways rise and fall, and wind under avenues of laburnum, yellow and purple; and lilac; and May, red and white; past odd nooks and shady bowers; from light to shadow, from shadow to light; where the brook plays sweet airs amidst the pebbles, and the trees murmur softly to the moon.

The hours fly by with woven wings in that enchanted garden. It is a summer night. Those two I see wandering, with hands clasped, through that fairy expanse; and the voice of Philomel is less sweet than that maiden's whisper, nor deems he that Paradise contains more of bliss than is his. Upon a rustic bench they sit them down, and for a while

the silence is unbroken, save only for the subdued harmonies of Nature's voices. The pearly moon reveals the wondrous beauty of the maiden, and the youth can do nought but gaze upon her face—thrilled with the tender love-light of her eyes. To-morrow she will be his bride. To-morrow! Only a few slow, creeping hours. Soon will the night close-fold her raven wings, and with the first blush of the morn they will meet again. Then, one other brief parting; then, a meeting for evermore.

There comes a time for parting, soon or late, for those who love—happy those who only part to meet again. Slowly they wander through the pathway set with flowers. The branches of one fair rose-tree, whose frail blossoms the moon-beams tip with silver overset the narrow way; here they linger, and each for the other chooses a flower, as life's love pledge, to nestle near each heart through all the future years.

And thus he passes into the night.

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Is it but a dream, a fantasy—or was that friendship all a seeming, a mockery and a lie; the treacherous garb of hate? Was it all a seeming—or may love turn to enmity, and trust to betrayal, and desire con-

quer over all? What is this foul accusation that drags the brimming cup of joy from the lover's lips and dashes it to the ground—this horror, that ends in a prison cell? Ah, devilish cunning of plot and plan, web enmeshed and forged—unparalleled villainy! It burns like hot iron into the soul, and he dwells alone in the night amid shapes that are horrible and unreal.

I see someone in the dock, someone very like myself, with a face cold, white and drawn; his hands twitch and clutch the rails, while all around is a sea of cruel eyes—eyes that wait and watch and stare—like those of beasts of prey. At times, he has been raving mad, but he is calm now; calm, with the sad calm of resignation and hopelessness. They have all forsaken him, one by one, even she—his guilt is written against him so plainly. And that black heart, he sits there and he knows, and they will not believe—such fiendish baseness cannot be, they say; and the mother, only the mother remains.

Hush! The jury has found him guilty. The judge pronounces his doom. They are leading him away to a prison cell. A woman screams and faints. My God, what a cry! "Poor woman," he says, "poor woman, perhaps she is his mother! His

mother, his mother," he repeats, "why, it is my mother! And I, I am that outcast!" And then he beats the ground and shrieks aloud.

Then follow ten long years, when only impressive memory-pauses relieve the suffering soul. Ten long years of torture and degradation, and one purpose only to feed his thoughts. The stake that fiend played for has been won, and the wedding bells jangle, jangle, ever in his chains. "Honored, and happy, and married—and fiend, and traitor; Judas and devil, and honored, and happy, and married, to her who loved you, to her you love so." Thus it goes, always, and always, and always. Day, hour, minute, insult, loathing, toil, privation succeed and fail, their acuteness dulled by the monotony of pain, and the one thought that excludes all others—the purpose wrought of wrong and bitter hate. And a voice whispers, whispers without, within, in field and cell, all the days and through the nights: "Your mother is dead, he killed her: your mother is dead, he broke her heart; she died dishonored, in agony; your mother is dead, he murdered her; he has stolen your liberty, your honor; he has stolen your loved one, your wife; he is a fiend, he is accursed—kill him, kill him, kill him!"

And at length he is free, and once again he reaches his boyhood's home.

I see a glorious mansion, set in a wide stretch of valley, leading to wooded heights, where the waters wander and the moon looks down. I see a figure crouching in the shade, with the lust of hate and the lust of blood in his eyes, and ever he mutters, over and over to himself, "At last, at last!" He creeps across the lawn, slowly, softly, muttering, muttering: "You within there, you within, at last, at last!" Ever and anon he pauses and crouches behind a bush on the damp grass, and feels and fondles a gleaming blade of steel, and mutters, mutters: "Ten years, mother, love, liberty, honor-pain, pain, ten yearsat last, at last!" Slowly still and creeping, with every nerve tense and in accord, he nears the casement and the light, and glares into the room, where the lamplight gleams and the ruddy fire glows, and the happy family is gathered. He sees her sitting there, as his mother used to sit, and kneeling at her feet, in their robes of night, are three little childish forms. Listen, they are repeating a prayer after her, as he used to repeat it after his mother-the same prayer; he had almost forgotten it: "Our Father which art in heaven," and "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," and "Deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom." And "God bless my papa, and keep him from harm throughout this night!" Ah, the innocent and trusting, they cling about the father with good-night kisses and tender names, and the mother's eyes are filled with love and pride and peace.

Ah, the innocent, the trusting, the innocent.

He cannot, he cannot do it. He knows not why, but the tears fall thick and fast, like rain; something akin to joy and triumph transforms him as he turns away; and thus he passes into the night again for evermore.

I see the grey dawn breaking, breaking, so cold, so pitiless, on a poor man who is not old, as years are counted, but, oh, so old in suffering—so old, so worn, so grey. He is counting, counting, counting, always ten, always ten. Hush! His heart is broken and bleeding—I know. They say he is mad, and they take him to where the fools gibber, the fiends mock and strong men are cruel, cruel—but they do not know, how can they know? But I know.

It is always the same, always the same, always the same—begins and ends and begins.

A Grey Day—Lake St. Francis.

I watch the squirrel, the rufous-brown squirrel, free, piquant and adorable as youth. Erect, he regards me sidelong with his bright eyes, and I hold an acorn in my hand.

I hold a tawny-brown acorn in my hand: the cup majolica, bronze and creamy brown, exquisitely modelled, glazed; the nut a dome, warm, bright, crowned with a spire. I hold the acorn in my hand, but I weary of the crimson tresses of the sumach.

I weary of the crimson tresses of the sumach, and I remember the song of the sunset-thrush: "Sweet, sweet, sweet; sorrowful, sorrowful, sorrowful."

I remember the song of the sunset-thrush, the plaintive ditty of the vesper sparrows heard in chorus, the sweet, melancholy "villilel" of the veery, and the

flute-like tones of the oriole; and I hear the wild rapid.

I hear the wild rapid; mark the mad swirl of waters, the white-caps and the cruel rocks; the lake spread out before me, an indented mirror; the coast line repeating itself in waving shadows;—and I listen to the north wind.

I listen to the north wind, that shivers the shadows into silver, bends the wild rice to a circle with its shade, scatters the golden crab-apples, harries the dead leaves, disperses the opalescent seeds, and bears aloft the silken balloons of the thistle.

And, all aweary of the crimson tresses of the sumach, I hold an acorn in my hand, and I regard the grey day.

Dominion Square.

Like an oasis in a desert, or a green island in a waste of waters, seems the pleasant square to the weary wayfarer. Its smooth lawns are verdant with the tint of spring and of hope; its trees are reposeful; its flowers are the satellites of peace.

Yonder meditative man passes many a quiet hour in the square, and has found much to interest him. He sees the last snows melt there, and he loves to watch the opening tulips—those bannerets of spring—waving in the April breezes. At the bedding out of the plants, he is an interested observer; he takes a personal interest in their welfare; and he knows each component of those foliage designs whose brilliancy of color is so dazzling in the sunshine and so pleasing in the shade. But, most of all, from his quiet seat, he loves to watch the procession of humanity

go by, so enthralling it is in its likeness and in its diversity.

Through all the torrid days of summer, the old people come there, to sun themselves in the afternoons. So feeble they are, some of them, they can hardly totter to their benches beneath the trees. But, sometimes, strong, young arms support them and bright eyes read to them, and the square seems to know it somehow, and to be filled with a brightness not all of the sun, and pathos gives place to joy.

The mother comes there, from the close room, with her sick infant—for the mother is poor, and the country and the seaside are, oh, so far away! How puny and frail the poor child is, and how much the more beloved for that by its devoted nurse! He knows them not, but he prays for fresh, cool zephyrs and the life of the sickly one, as if his own fate depended upon the issue.

The workman seeks the square and rests there, if for but a little while; and goes on his way rejoicing and refreshed. The old woman, whose bundle is heavy, blesses the city for a dole of ease. There the nursemaids bring their charges, and there glad youth loves to play.

But it is at night-time when the square gives the best of itself to man. Then every seat is filled with youth and age, and the pathways are charmed with riant life, as in a pleasing masquerade. Down the blue-domed corridors walk the lover and his lass—and those who would be lovers, and (alas!) are not. The white lights fall among the leaves like the quavering of streams in silvery play; ethereal shades of peace invite to the recesses; the flowers lie all along the lawns like the richest of brocades; the winds whisper of the sea, of southern peace, and groves of palm!

It is all so clean and sweet and dignified. And the leisurely man thinks, as he walks in meditation to his own roof-tree, that of all the bright jewels a city wears, a beautiful garden is the brightest.

Mount Royal.

I.

THE PASSING OF AUTUMN.

An October afternoon. The dome of the sky perfect in outline, cloudless; the crown brilliantly azure; towards the horizon, grey, pallid; westward, suggestions of purple and amethyst; the sun, a silvery, scintillating orb, ringed and rayed with incandescence—unapproachable, whereat presumption quails.

Upward, upon the mountain, the crimson flies from bough to bough like a forest fire, and the complemental mists haunt all the hollows; not as, upon yonder distant Laurentians, in the early mornings of late summer, the vapors rush up all the valleys, tumultuous, before the rising sun; but sullen, stead-

fast or striving foot by foot with senescent majesty for recognition and dominion.

The burnt-out torches of the common mullein stand erect, sentinel-like, near the borders of the wood, and like the dying flames of lamps, a few pale yellow blossoms still flicker upon their summits. Some belated evening primroses and golden-rods linger on, side by side; but decay has touched them with her fingers, and they hasten towards the realm of withered things.

Asters and Michaelmas daisies (whose draperies are bits of sky and snatches of cloud) wander, sadeyed and melancholy, amidst the revelry of the madder-tinted vines and the luxuriant vermilion tresses of the sumach. Upon an infrequent stem, the china-blue succory stays cheerlessly crocketed. The berries of the carrion flower are blue-black, bunched and glum, and scowl at the riotous scarlet racemes of the false Solomon's seal. A wayfaring bumble-bee marks the pink-purple sign of the Red Clover Head—a lone hostelry—which promises good cheer. Everlasting flowers, aforetime pearly-grey, are now cinereous. The grasshoppers whistle cheerily in the sun and sadly in the shade.

Where the purple and violet color-shadows linger under the half-transparency of the yellow-green foliage, the humble self-heal reclines, the brown fern rustles, the woolly achenia of the anemone protects its seeds, the wondrously-fashioned acorn falls, and the tawny leaves of the oak carpet the neighboring sward. There, too, the squirrel loves to play; and where the sun smiles along the clearing, where the warm sienna leaves lie amidst the cool, grey rocks, a piece of nutmeg-scented, yarrow milfoil raises its meek and pretty crown of flowers.

No fairer looked Proserpina, when she wandered in the flowerless fields of Dis, than does yonder burnished buttercup, lost in the indigo depths of these woods, where no birds sing, and only a funereal rook makes mournful dissonance in a neighboring tree. The cheerless purple-grey blossoms of the rattlesnake-root hang on a solitary stalk near by. The fragrant white and yellow melilot is tangled in the clearing; there the austere thistle raises its purple head, clad in mail; and there, too, one last bluedomed bell-flower remains to toll the knell of dissolution.

Sombre and inscrutable, companionable only to

the winds, the pines look down from yonder height upon the kaleidoscopic glory of decay (the Masque of Death) palest yellow to deepest amber, illimitable gold, wealth of wondrous browns, purples, scarlets, crimsons; vivid, amazing! They mark the sun burn low down in the west, a ball of fire; see the mists, grown bolder, encroaching upon the plain, covering the river, and picketing the hills; the shades of night foregathering in the fields and the recesses of the woods awaiting their dusky queen, in whose footsteps shall follow winter's satellites, frost, and the bitter winds, and, perchance, snow. Presently, they shall see these rush forth, exultant, unrestrained, to a wild night of slaughter, a revelry of red rain; will view the dawning of a morrow, when the brown, bare trees shall uprise in a waste of white, and autumn shall be no more.

II.

A WINTER SUNSET.

The sun arose angrily, blood-red, out of a cinereous cloud—bedraggled with the smoke of a city. He bedecked the cloud with royal purple and embroideries of gold, until it trailed away, a robe of glory, and disappeared beyond the horizon. Then the sun put out a burnished silver shield, and all the day his silvery and crystalline lances have shot athwart the azure of his dominions, gleaming in their flight; they have fallen incessantly upon the legions of snow-clouds—besiegers of the blue—keeping them at bay; but now his weapons are all spent, the bright, round shield grows dull, misshapen and discolored; the cloud-hordes creep ever higher, above the horizon, and a wind rushes forth to clarion their approach to victory.

A great fear has fallen upon the trees, where they uprise, tier upon tier—they are ashy-pale, they tremble. The slender birch and poplar sway wildly to and fro; the maples raise wan arms beseechingly to the skies; the monarchs of the glades, the giant oaks and elms, bow their lofty heads in submission; only the dark pines wave their warrior-like plumes and thrust a thousand subtle spears upon the air defiantly.

The wind rushes over the mountain and sweeps away, past the sun-illumined peaks and the ice-bound river, and now silence stalks over the wastes of snow. No sign of life is here, save for yonder solitary woodman, who crouches near a blue wreath of smoke and warms his chilly hands in a pink and cadmium flame; save that the mast about the bole of this oak, torn and tooth-worn, tells of a squirrel's late repast.

All the west is now aflame with orange-crimson cloud—a serpentine fringe of green separating it from the azure. The red sun tips the peaks of the hills with gold, scatters rubies over the snow and bedecks the trees with a purple mantle. There comes upon the solitary a mystic sound, as of the deepening and

darkening of things, and, through the gloom, where all the curtaining twigs and stems are, grey wraiths start up suddenly, like spectres, and so steal away. Veil-like mists arise and creep over the valleys. An inquiet sense, as of pursuit, dogs the footsteps of the wanderer through the woods.

The sun has gone now, and only a fitful gleam, the zodiacal search-light, lingers in the sky; the shadows coalesce; the woods grow ever deeper and darker; the burnt-out clouds are ashes of many-toned grey. And now a wonderful thing happens: in the afterglow the snow recovers its lost purity, and slowly unfolds, like a great white rose, or a vast night-blooming cereus. Then, the stars rush out, flashing like jewels through the rent clouds; even the snow is all bediamonded. But now the storm-winds laugh aloud, leaping in their glee; the presumptuous clouds scale the topmost rampart of the stars; and, presently, all the air is a whirling white opacity.

The Arrow Bead.

I sing the praises of the Arrow Head (Sagittaria Variabilis). It differs in development, as man differs from man, but, at its best, it is magnificent. I wander by the marge of some slow stream, or placid pool, and I observe the beauty of the leaf—its grandeur of outline, its antique glory of color, its regard for the minutest detail, the marvellous finish of the whole.

I observe the beauty of the leaf, and of the flower—perhaps, even more wondrously beautiful. And I gather a few of the long tapering scapes, in bud and blossom, and place them in a vase of water to adorn my room. Around the green, inflected stem, the flowers are whorled in sets of threes, and I count nine sets.

I count nine sets, and I mark the enchanting birth of these blossoms, born as triplets, beginning with

the undermost. With the early morning, the light, bronzed, nut-like bud splits into three sepals, from which peep the gauzy, crumpled petals; the three petals slowly unfold, like delicate, snow-white wings of satin; the golden centre of sepals is disclosed to view; and, in an hour, the three perfect blossoms gleam forth with an ethereal loveliness.

For several days, I have passed this unique hour with succeeding whorls of opening buds.

At Phillipsburg.

UNDER THE MAPLES-JUNE.

An emerald lawn, bejewelled with ginseng—three and five leaved; buttercups—burnished, beaten gold; violets—amber and amethystine; saxifrage—adorning a stone.

Reclining upon the grass, as irresponsible as the flowers, as inconsequent as the pied butterflies, lazily amused by the strenuous ants, the bustling bees, the quick, iridescent dragon-flies,—a tramp!

The plateau is an irregular oval, long and narrow, encircled with trees. Lakeward, the pines descend the precipitous rocks in serried ranks; landward, the maples mark the foot of an easy ascent. Beneath the maples the warm shadows lie, and all is still. Here are grey boulders, mantled with moss, and a

congregation of wild-flowers: Columbine, Celandine, Tall Mitrewort, Wood Mignonette, False Solomon's Seal, Preacher in the Pulpit, Wild Ginger (*Asarum Canadense*) and Herb Robert.

Upon an olive-green dais, arrayed in a motley of scarlet and gold, the Columbine dances to music too sweet for earthly ears. The assembly looks on, and bows its approbation to the same seraphic melody. Only, the *Asarum Canadense* hides its head under the dried forest leaves and listens—for the *Asarum Canadense* is a dwarf, with a brown, odd-looking face, and it shrinks from companionship with its fellows, lest it might be slighted.

The Thousand Islands.

Oberon and Titania, Puck, Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard-Seed—where are they?

Aurora skips over the waters, scattering the petals of pink roses in the pathway of the sun; my paddle drips with emeralds and amethysts and pearls; there are rainbow-tinted jewels gleaming and flashing all around me.

I know that some wizard has enchanted me, that nothing here is real, and that all too soon the spell will be removed. But, meanwhile, I miss the fairies.

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